

JOINTED BALE KICKER FOR A ROUND BALER

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A round baler for forming round bales of agricultural crop material includes a bale kicker mechanism for ensuring that the bale is clear of the path of movement of the baler tailgate after the bale has been discharged from the baler and before movement of the tailgate from its open position to its closed position. The bale kicker mechanism includes an inner section which is movably mounted to the baler for movement between a raised position and a lowered position, and an outer section which is pivotably mounted to the inner bale kicker section, to form a jointed bale kicker construction. The inner bale kicker section extends downwardly and rearwardly from the bale-forming chamber at a relatively sharp angle when in its lowered position, to facilitate discharge of the bale from the bale-forming chamber. The outer bale kicker section defines an outer end which engages the ground when the inner bale kicker section is in its lowered position, to provide a ramp for moving the bale onto the ground. After the bale has been discharged, the inner bale kicker section is moved to its raised position, which lifts the outer bale kicker section upwardly so as to move the bale off the outer bale kicker section and to engage an end member of the outer bale kicker section with the outer surface of the bale. In this manner, the bale is maintained at a predetermined space rearwardly of the baler, to enable the tailgate to be moved to its closed position without interference from the bale. A bale exit sensor is employed to ensure that the bale is fully discharged from the bale-forming chamber before the tailgate is moved to its closed position.